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Korea pullout worries Turner

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WASHINGTON — Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director of Central Intelligence, shares some of the apprehensions expressed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff about President Carter's plan to withdraw all American combat troops from South Korea.

Turner said in an interview with The Globe: "My position is that we have a balance of deterrence (between North and South Korea) today, when you withdraw forces, that in some measure diminishes it. Whether it diminishes it below the level of stability is another question that's very difficult to answer."

Turner denied that in a private meeting with the President he directly recommended against the withdrawal plan. "I laid out... as expressly and as frankly and as objectively as I could... from an intelligence point of view, not a policy point of view... the pros and cons of withdrawal, what I thought the reactions of various involved countries would be... I did not make any recommendation."

In an hour-long interview in his seventh floor CIA office, Turner also made the following points:

- It is not certain that the United States could detect a South Korean effort to develop nuclear weapons.

- The Soviet Union follows a different strategic philosophy than the United States, planning extensively

how to fight a nuclear war and recover from its effects, as well as how to deter one.

- He does not share the reported conclusion of a major study done for the Carter Administration that the Soviet military threat is "leveling off."

- If the US cuts formal military and diplomatic ties to Taiwan, China could militarily take over the island fortress only at great cost in lives. And if China decided to impose a blockade around Taiwan instead, she would have to deal with the animosity of the 30 or so countries that trade with Taiwan.

Carter's Korean withdrawal plan came under increasing fire in Congress last week after North Korean gunners shot down a United States helicopter that mistakenly strayed into their territory, and in face of revelations that the Joint Chiefs had voiced strong

doubts about the size of the President's pullout.

Both Gen. George Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and Gen. Bernard Rogers, Army Chief of Staff, testified that the top brass had recommended that only about one-quarter of the 32,000 United States combat troops be withdrawn over five years, fearing a higher risk of war. Maj. Gen. John Singlaub earlier had been called on the White House carpet and reassigned from Korea after he told a reporter the larger pullout could lead to war.

Turner's interview with The Globe was the first clear indication that he, too, was concerned about Mr. Carter's plan announced at an early White House press conference before a National Security Council study of the proposal could be completed.

But Turner was quick to point out

that there are many ways to make the United States commitment to help defend South Korea "pretty persuasive."

He said these include the maintenance in Korea of strong United States fighter-bomber squadrons, military aid to build up the South's army, more United States military training exercises in Korea, and strong statements from the Administration of its continue commitment and resolve.

The United States is known to have about 1000 tactical nuclear weapons in Korea and intends at this point to pull them out along with the troops. Without conceding this deployment, Turner declared: "When you withdraw any kind of military tool, you've got to weigh how credible was it that it would have been committed by the owner country" — how credible was the

possibility that it would have been used.

Some critics of the Carter plan have asserted the withdrawal may induce the Seoul regime to attempt secretly to develop its own nuclear weapons to deter attack. A number of Administration planners belittle that notion, feeling that the United States is bound to discover any such attempt and might, in response, cut off vital military and economic cooperation with Korea.

But Turner, whose CIA operatives would be depended on to discover any such covert effort, was hesitant to predict success in spotting it. Getting weapon-grade uranium from the bulky gaseous-diffusion process would be relatively easy to discover, he said, but certain advanced technology such as the centrifuge process, would be much harder to discern.